

HOUSE BILL 362

**57TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2025**

INTRODUCED BY

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AN ACT

RELATING TO THE ENVIRONMENT; CREATING A RAINFALL ENHANCEMENT  
PILOT PROJECT TO BE CONDUCTED BY THE ROOSEVELT SOIL AND WATER  
CONSERVATION DISTRICT; REQUIRING REPORTING; MAKING AN  
APPROPRIATION.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

SECTION 1. [NEW MATERIAL] RAINFALL ENHANCEMENT PILOT  
PROJECT--CREATED--ADMINISTRATION.--

A. The Roosevelt soil and water conservation  
district shall create, develop and administer a three-year  
"rainfall enhancement pilot project". The purpose of the  
project is to demonstrate the efficacy of rainfall enhancement  
as a mechanism to mitigate the effects of climate change and  
drought.

B. The public interest, health, safety, welfare and

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1 necessity require scientific experimentation in the field of  
2 artificial nucleation, commonly known as rainfall enhancement  
3 or rainfall augmentation, and scientific efforts to develop and  
4 increase natural precipitation of rain, snow and moisture in  
5 any form contained in the atmosphere within the state are  
6 encouraged in order to develop, conserve and protect the  
7 natural water resources of the state and to safeguard life and  
8 property.

9 C. The Roosevelt soil and water conservation  
10 district and the board of regents of New Mexico state  
11 university shall enter into a joint powers agreement for the  
12 state climatologist and university extension services to  
13 review, analyze and validate data from the rainfall enhancement  
14 pilot project to create evidence-based weather modification  
15 demonstration projects using current and evolving scientific  
16 methods of rainfall enhancement and test the relative benefits  
17 of those methods and the potential environmental risks.

18 D. All water derived as a result of rainfall  
19 enhancement shall be considered a part of the natural water  
20 supply in the same sense as if no rainfall enhancement pilot  
21 project had been conducted, and any water so derived shall not  
22 be subject to new appropriations but shall be administered and  
23 distributed to users in accordance with existing water rights.

24 E. The act of rainfall enhancement pursuant to a  
25 project funded in whole or in part by the state of New Mexico

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1 or authorized by the board of regents of New Mexico state  
2 university shall not be the basis of any claim of liability.

3 SECTION 2. [NEW MATERIAL] REPORTING.--The state  
4 climatologist and extension services shall:

5 A. establish forms and criteria for reporting data  
6 and recordkeeping and cause a permanent record to be kept of  
7 all pertinent data related to the rainfall enhancement pilot  
8 project or research related to other factors that may be  
9 affected by rainfall enhancement activities;

10 B. report annually the results of the rainfall  
11 enhancement pilot project to the appropriate legislative  
12 interim committee; and

13 C. make a final report to the governor and  
14 legislature making recommendations for improvements to and the  
15 necessity of continuing the rainfall enhancement project.

16 SECTION 3. APPROPRIATION.--Three million six hundred  
17 thousand dollars (\$3,600,000) is appropriated from the general  
18 fund to the board of regents of New Mexico state university for  
19 expenditure in fiscal years 2026 through 2028 for the Roosevelt  
20 soil and water conservation district to develop and administer  
21 a rainfall enhancement pilot project. Any unexpended or  
22 unencumbered balance remaining at the end of fiscal year 2028  
23 shall revert to the general fund.